generated by the biasing spring **252**. To release the blocking member **250** from its retracted position, a user may press the end of the stylus **226** inwardly so as to unlatch the blocking member **250** from its retracted position. After the blocking member **250** is unlatched, the biasing spring **252** pushes the blocking member **250** and the stylus **226** outwardly. The stylus **226** may then be pulled out of the stylus channel **228** and used by the operator. The latch mechanism employed for latching the blocking member **250** in its retracted position, and releasing the blocking member **250** from the retracted position, may be any one of numerous mechanisms which are found in commercially available pens, for example.

As any one who has written with a pen can appreciate, by pressing a button located at one end of a pen, a writing tip may be caused to extend outwardly from the opposite end of the pen. A latch mechanism holds the writing tip of the pen against a tensile force produced by a biasing spring within the pen, thus allowing a user to write/draw using the writing tip of the pen. To release the pen tip from this outward position, the user need only press down on the button a second time, to disengage the latch mechanism which holds the pen tip outwardly, thereby retracting the writing tip into the body of the pen. The blocking member **250** may be spring-biased and configured with any well-known latch mechanism, such as that described above with respect to writing pens, for example, in accordance with one embodiment of the invention.

It is contemplated within the scope of the invention that many different configurations of a stylus-actuated blocking member may be implemented. For example, a blocking member may be spring-biased to transversely enter a stylus channel from a direction that is substantially perpendicular to a longitudinal axis of the channel so as to be positioned to at least partially obstruct an aperture for receiving a stop member. When the stylus is inserted into the stylus channel, the stylus may engage an angled portion of the blocking member so as to push the blocking member sideways and out of the stylus channel. When the blocking member is not positioned within the channel, the blocking member no longer obstructs the aperture. Furthermore, since the blocking member is spring-biased to move into the stylus channel, the blocking member will exert force on a side of the stylus, thereby helping to secure the stylus within the stylus channel. The above-described configuration is only one of many different configurations contemplated by the invention.

As described above with respect to FIGS. **4–9**, when the stylus **226** is not inserted and received by the stylus channel **228**, the computer **200** will not close properly. Therefore, a user who attempts to close the computer **200** without the stylus **226** properly seated in the stylus channel **228** will discover that the stylus **226** is missing from its holder. In this way, the user is reminded to replace the stylus **226** into the stylus channel **228** after each use of the stylus **226**. It is contemplated that this reminder will impart upon the user the importance of properly placing the stylus **226** back into the stylus channel **228** after each use, thereby significantly reducing the possibility that the stylus **226** will become lost due to inadvertent misplacement.

The invention may be embodied in other specific forms without departing from its spirit or essential characteristics. The described embodiments are to be considered in all respects only as illustrative and not restrictive. The scope of the invention is, therefore, indicated by the appended claims, rather than by the foregoing description. All changes which come within the meaning and range of equivalency of the claims are to be embraced within their scope.

What is claimed is:

1. A method of closing a device having a stylus, comprising:

positioning a first housing member of the device with respect to a second housing member of the device so as to place the first and second housing members in a closed configuration;

receiving a stylus within a stylus channel coupled to the second housing member; and

engaging a latch, coupled to the first housing member, with the stylus as the stylus is inserted into the stylus channel, thereby securing the first and second housing members in the closed configuration.

2. The method of claim **1** further comprising biasing the first housing member to be in an open position with respect to the second housing member, when the stylus is not received within the stylus channel.

3. A method of closing a device having a stylus, the device including a first housing member and a second housing member, coupled to the first housing member, the method comprising preventing the first housing member from closing with respect to the second housing member when the stylus is not positioned within a stylus channel of the device.

4. The method of claim **3** wherein said act of preventing the first housing member from closing with respect to the second housing member comprises biasing a blocking member, coupled to the second housing member, to be positioned to obstruct an aperture located on the second housing member so as to prevent a stop member, coupled to said first housing member, from extending through the aperture.

5. The method of claim **4** further comprising allowing said first housing member to be secured in a closed position with respect to said second housing member, only when said stylus is positioned within said channel.

6. The system of claim **5** wherein said act of securing comprises engaging a latch, coupled to said first housing member, with a latch release, coupled to said second housing member.

7. The method of claim **6** further comprising biasing said first housing member to be in an open position with respect to said second housing member when said stylus is not positioned within said channel.

8. A method of notifying a user of the removal of a stylus from a stylus receiver of an electronic device, comprising:

movably attaching a first device housing member having a latch to a second device housing member, the second device housing member having a stylus receiver disposed at least partly therein;

inserting the stylus into the stylus receiver, the stylus engaging the latch so as to maintain the electronic device in a closed configuration;

biasing the first device housing member with respect to the second device housing member so as to urge the first and second device housing members into an open configuration when the latch is not engaged by the stylus;

removing at least a portion of the stylus from the receiver; and

in the response to the act of removing, allowing said first and second device housing members to be urged into the open configuration, thereby notifying the user that the stylus has been removed.

9. The method of claim **8**, wherein the act of movably hingedly attaching comprises attaching the first and second device housing members such that the first device housing